

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION USBERLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 169776

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR,GE,US

SUBJECT: GDR AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY
HARTMAN

SUMMARY: GDR AMBASSADOR SIEBER CALLED ON ASSISTANT
SECRETARY HARTMAN JULY 8 TO REVIEW US-GDR RELATIONS PRIOR
TO HIS DEPARTURE FOR CONSULTATIONS AND LEAVE IN THE GDR.
SIEBER PRESSED FOR MOVEMENT ACROSS THE BOARD BUT WISHED
THE CONSULAR AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS LEFT ASIDE BECAUSE OF
THE NATIONALITY DEFINITION PROBLEM. HARTMAN TOOK FIRM
LINE THAT WE HAD BOTH AGREED THE CONSULAR CONVENTION WAS
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TO BE THE FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS AND THAT WE SHOULD

FOLLOW THROUGH WITH THAT COMMITMENT. HE TOLD SIEBER THAT ONCE THAT ISSUE WAS SATISFACTORILY RESOLVED, PROGRESS IN OTHER AREAS OF MUTUAL INTEREST WOULD BE POSSIBLE. HE URGED SIEBER TO PASS THIS MESSAGE TO HIS SUPERIORS IN EAST BERLIN. END SUMMARY

1. SIEBER BEGAN BY THANKING DEPARTMENT FOR ITS ASSISTANCE IN GAINING PERMISSION FOR THE OVERFLIGHTS OF THE US BY GDR AIRCRAFT EN ROUTE TO THE OLYMPICS WITH THE EAST GERMAN TEAM. HE ALSO NOTED HONECKER'S MESSAGE TO THE US ON THE OCCASION OF THE BICENTENNIAL. HARTMAN EXPRESSED GRATITUDE FOR HONECKER'S WORDS.

2. SIEBER THEN LAUNCHED INTO THE MAIN PURPOSE OF HIS VISIT. HE SAID HE WAS RETURNING TO EAST BERLIN WHERE HE WOULD MEET WITH HONECKER TO DISCUSS THE STATE OF US-GDR RELATIONS. HE SAID THAT HE HOPED IN PARTICULAR THAT TRADE RELATIONS WERE DEVELOPING POSITIVELY. HE ALLUDED TO THE IMPENDING AGREEMENT BETWEEN DOW CHEMICAL AND SEVEN GDR FIRMS. HE SAID HE HOPED HE COULD RETURN FROM EAST BERLIN WITH AN INVITATION FOR A STATE DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVE TO ATTEND THE LEIPZIG FAIR THIS FALL. HE ASKED IF IT WOULD BE ACCEPTED. HARTMAN SAID WE WOULD LOOK INTO THE POSSIBILITY, NOTING THAT A SENIOR COMMERCE DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVE HAD GONE IN THE PAST.

3. HARTMAN SAID THAT WE TOO FAVORED DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE RELATIONS, PARTICULARLY THAT PROMOTED BY PRIVATE US COMPANIES. HOWEVER, BEFORE ANYTHING COULD BE ACHIEVED ON THE GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT LEVEL, SUCH AS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TRADE OFFICE, WE WOULD WISH TO SEE CERTAIN OUTSTANDING POLITICAL ISSUES RESOLVED. WE HAD BOTH AGREED TO MAKE CONCLUSION OF A CONSULAR AGREEMENT OUR FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS. WE SHOULD FOLLOW THROUGH ON THAT COMMITMENT AND THEREBY FORM THE BASIS FOR STEP-BY-STEP PROGRESS IN OUR RELATIONS. HARTMAN STRESSED THAT WE WISHED TO GET THE CONSULAR CONVENTION OUT OF THE WAY AND IN A MANNER THAT DID NOT PREJUDICE EITHER SIDE'S POSITION ON THE VEXING NATIONALITY ISSUE. HE ASKED SIEBER TO PRESENT THIS VIEWPOINT TO HIS
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AUTHORITIES IN EAST BERLIN. IN ANSWER TO SIEBER'S QUESTION, HARTMAN SAID THE UK-GDR SOLUTION ON NATIONALITY DEFINITION WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO THE US SIDE.

4. SIEBER ASKED WHAT THE PROSPECTS WERE FOR AN EARLY FISHERIES NEGOTIATION, SUCH AS THE GDR HAD PREVIOUSLY PROPOSED. HARTMAN SAID FISHERIES NEGOTIATIONS WITH MANY OTHER COUNTRIES, INCLUDING THE GDR, WOULD HAVE TO AWAIT

RESULTS OF THE NEXT LOS CONFERENCE. IF THINGS DEVELOPED PROPERLY THERE, THEN NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE GDR AND OTHERS WOULD PROBABLY BE NECESSARY.

5. SIEBER ASKED IF CONCLUSION OF THE PARCEL POST AGREEMENT WOULD HAVE TO AWAIT CONCLUSION OF THE CONSULAR CONVENTION. HARTMAN SAID NOT AT ALL, BUT THE OUTSTANDING POLITICAL ISSUES WOULD HAVE TO BE CLEARED UP BEFORE A US POSTAL DELEGATION WENT (AS THE GDR HAD EARLIER PROPOSED) TO EAST BERLIN FOR TALKS. HARTMAN STRESSED THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT WOULD HAVE TO SETTLE THE POLITICAL PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS, THEN THE US POSTAL AUTHORITIES COULD HANDLE THE TECHNICAL POSTAL MATTERS.

6. SIEBER SAID HE WISHED TO NOTE THAT THE GDR WAS RESPONDING FAVORABLY TO THE US IN THE MATTER OF "SO-CALLED" HUMANITARIAN CASES. HE SAID OVER 50 PER CENT OF THE ORIGINAL US LIST HAD BEEN SETTLED POSITIVELY. HARTMAN SAID WE HAD NOTICED THIS DEVELOPMENT AND WERE PLEASED WITH IT.

7. SIEBER NOTED THE SUCCESS OF THE VISIT OF US ASTRONAUT CARR TO THE GDR AND, REVERTING TO THE CONSULAR CONVENTION DIFFICULTIES, ASKED IF IT WERE NOT POSSIBLE TO LEAVE THE CONSULAR NEGOTIATIONS ASIDE AND PROCEED WITH DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS IN OTHER AREAS. HARTMAN SAID THAT WHILE NOT WISHING TO REPEAT WHAT HE HAD SAID BEFORE ON VARIOUS OCCASIONS, HE COULD ONLY REITERATE THAT THE CONSULAR AGREEMENT ISSUE WAS THE PRINCIPAL OBSTACLE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF GOOD RELATIONS AT PRESENT. ONCE THAT WAS SOLVED SATISFACTORILY, THEN THERE COULD BE BROADER DISCUSSIONS OF OTHER MATTERS, SUCH AS TRADE, CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC-
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TECHNOLOGICAL COOPERATION. HE CONCLUDED BY URGING SIEBER AGAIN TO TRY TO GET THE CONSULAR ISSUE REVIEWED AND RESOLVED BY HIS LEADERS IN THE GDR. SIEBER SAID THIS WOULD BE DIFFICULT SINCE OUR POSITIONS WERE SO OPPOSED. HARTMAN SAID THIS NEED NOT BLOCK CONCLUSION OF AN AGREEMENT, IF ONLY THE GDR WOULD DROP ITS INSISTENCE ON A NATIONALITY DEFINITION. DOING SO, HE NOTED, WOULD PREJUDICE NEITHER SIDE'S POSITION.

8. FINALLY, HARTMAN MENTIONED THE DESIRABILITY OF THE GDR'S TAKING UP EARLY AND USEFUL TALKS WITH THE US JEWISH CLAIMS REPRESENTATIVES. HE NOTED THAT THE JEWISH GROUP'S EFFORTS TO DATE HAD NOT MET WITH ANY SUCCESS IN EAST BERLIN.

9. COMMENT: SIEBER WAS CLEARLY UNHAPPY WITH THE LACK OF
GOOD NEWS HE IS ABLE TO TAKE WITH HIM TO EAST BERLIN.
THE TONE OF THE MEETING WAS FRANK YET FRIENDLY, WITH
SIEBER ALMOST HAND-WRINGING IN HIS EFFORT TO PRESS FOR
SOME FORWARD MOVEMENT IN RELATIONS THAT STILL PRESERVED
THE GDR POSITION ON A NATIONALITY DEFINITION IN THE
CONSULAR AGREEMENT.
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